LOK SABHA

Tuesday, March 11, 1997/Phalguna 20, 1918 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at One Minute Past Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Visakhapatnam) : Hon. Speaker is in good mood today.

MR. SPEAKER : When the House is in good mood, the Speaker has to be in good mood.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Cooperation with Foreign Countries

*222. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH :
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the countries cooperating/intend to cooperate with India in the agriculture sector;

(b) whether agreements have been signed with all the countries willing to cooperate in this sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

S.No.	Name of Country	Date of signing of Agreement/ MOU	Areas of cooperation
1	2	3	4
I.	**Countries with whom Agreements/MOUs have been signed**		
1.	Australia	2.2.1996	The Umbrella Arrangement between India and Australia provides for cooperation in Agricultural Research and collaborative projects in disciplines such as soil management, veterinary sciences and overcoming production constraints to Sorghum in rainfed environments in India and Australia.
2.	Bangladesh	15.6.1983	The agreement provides for cooperation in the areas of agriculture and animal husbandry, education, research and its application in practice etc.
3.	China	11.4.1992	The Memorandum of Understanding seeks to promote scientific, technical and economic cooperation in the field of agriculture through exchange of materials concerning agricultural science and technology, exchange of germplasm, seeds, seedlings and exchange of scientific and technical information etc.
4.	Cuba	16.9.1988	The Work Plan signed on 22.11.1996 under this agreement provides for cooperation in the field of science and technology and agricultural research and education.
5.	Cyprus	19.2.1992	The Programme of Cooperation covers the fields of horticulture, field crops, soil fertility, fertiliser use and irrigation technology etc.
6.	France	6.2.1994	The Agreement covers different areas including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, rural development and agro-food industries.
7.	Indonesia	19.12.1992	The Memorandum of Understanding covers various areas of cooperation in agriculture including food crops, secondary crops, rainfed farming, hybrid rice, fisheries, livestock etc.

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8.	Iran	11.11.1991	The Memorandum of Understanding provides for cooperation in the field of Agricultural Research and Education, Rural Development, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Sciences, Fisheries, Forestry, Water Management etc.
9.	Israel	24.12.1993	The Agreement covers areas of water and soil management, arid and semi-arid crop production, fruit and vegetable production, animal science, plant protection, agricultural research, agro-forestry etc.
		30.12.1996	The Memorandum of Intent relates to the establishment, in the first stage, of a demonstration farm unit on the campus of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute at PUSA in New Delhi with the aim of developing viable technological packages and technology transfer for the small farmer and private sector.
10.	Mauritius	3.6.1993	The Memorandum of Understanding covers different areas of agricultural science and technology, agricultural production and agro-processing and economic cooperation.
11.	Mongolia	16.9.1996	The Agreement seeks to promote scientific, technical and economic cooperation in the field of agriculture through exchange of technology, development of modern methods of bio-technology, formulation and implementation of joint research projects and establishing food processing small industries etc.
12.	Nepal	6.12.1991	The Memorandum of Understanding covers various aspects of agricultural science and technology, agricultural production and agro-processing including production and processing of food and cash crops, multi-cropping systems, fruit and vegetable development, dairy development etc.
13.	Oman	5.10.1996	The Memorandum of Understanding covers various aspects of agriculture and allied sectors including joint activities and exchanges in the areas of agricultural research, horticulture, dairy development, livestock, soil conservation, irrigation etc.
14.	Pakistan	4.7.1985	The Agreement provides for cooperation in the field of research and education as well as development in agriculture.
15.	Philippines	1.11.1976	The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Philippines Council of Agricultural Research and Rural Development (PCARRD) to promote collaborative agricultural research.
		28.4.1991	The Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Philippines covers Agricultural science and technology including areas of rice production and processing, multiple cropping system, dry land farming systems, water management, agricultural machinery, horticulture, dairy, livestock improvement etc.
16.	Senegal	16.2.1997	The Memorandum of Understanding provides for establishment of Agricultural Development Project in Senegal by the Government of India.
17.	Syria	19.6.1994	The Programme of Cooperation covers the areas of plant production research, horticulture, food processing industries, plant protection, animal production and health, soil and water management etc.

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18.	Trinidad & Tobago	24.1.1997	The Memorandum of Understanding provides for cooperation in the field of agriculture. The areas of cooperation include livestock, water management for agricultural purposes, sugarcane cultivation and sugar industry, crop improvement etc.
19.	United States of America	27.1.1996	The Agreement provides for cooperation in agricultural sciences to further cooperation among scientists from India and the United States of America in areas of significant mutual interests and benefits relating to agriculture, viz., exchange of information, ideas, skills and techniques to enhance opportunities to collaborate in solving problems of common interests relating to agriculture.
20.	Vietnam	31.12.1992	The Memorandum of Understanding provides for cooperation in the field of agricultural research and education and covers areas such as crop sciences, scientific research, animal sciences, dairy development, exchange of scientists etc.
21.	Yemen	7.12.1996	The Memorandum of Understanding covers agricultural science and technology, agricultural production and agro-processing etc.
22.	Russia	5.10.1995	The Agreement between Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences (RASS) provides for cooperation in the field of agriculture and related subjects.
II.	**Countries with whom Agreements/MOUs are intended to be signed**		
1.	Algeria		A Memorandum of Understanding is proposed to be developed between India and Algeria for cooperation in the field of agricultural research and education to take up joint research projects in the identified areas such as research on plant genetic resources and bio-technology; integrated pest management and control, dairy production, animal health and conservation of animal genetic resources, utilization and management of saline soils etc.
2.	Burkina Faso		A Memorandum of Understanding is proposed to be signed with the Government of Burkina Faso on cooperation for setting up of an Indian Farmers' Project in Burkina Faso. The objective of the project would be (a) to boost production of mutually agreed crops in Burkina Faso; (b) to create employment opportunities in Burkina Faso in agricultural and related sectors of agro-industry and (c) to act as a demonstrator's project and help transfer of appropriate technologies from India to Burkina Faso.
3.	Greece		A Memorandum of Understanding is proposed to be signed with the Government of Greece for cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors.
4.	Japan		A Memorandum of Understanding is proposed to be signed between Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Japan International Research Centre for Agricultural Sciences for cooperation in the field of agricultural research and education. The broad areas of cooperation include Horticulture, Animal Sciences, Agricultural/Engineering, Fisheries, Soil and Water Resource Conservation and Human Development.
5.	Morocco		A Memorandum of Understanding is proposed to be signed between Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the National Institute for Agricultural Research, Morocco for

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			scientific and technical cooperation. The cooperation includes Exchange of Scientists and Technologists and Breeding Material, Exchange of Scientific Literature methodologies, Import and Export of Scientific Equipments.
6.	Mozambique		Both the Government of India and Mozambique have agreed to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen the existing friendly relations between the two countries through development of cooperation in the fields of Agricultural Research, Extension and Training which includes Cereals and Vegetables, Management of Experimental Stations, Livestock Production and Livestock Health, Water Management, Agricultural Engineering, Crops Production, Seed Production etc. The Agriculture Minister has authorised the Ambassador of India at Maputo, Mozambique to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Government of India.
7.	Myanmar		A Memorandum of Understanding is proposed to be signed with the Government of the Union of Myanmar for cooperation in the field of Agricultural Science and Technology with the objective of increasing agricultural production.
8.	New Zealand		The Horticulture and Food Research Institute of New Zealand has proposed to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Indian Council of Agricultural Research to promote the development of cooperation in the fields of Research and Training in Plant Science and Improvement of Production Techniques and Extension through exchange of Germplasm, exchange of scientific Literature and Scientific Equipment etc. The draft Memorandum of Understanding is being processed for various clearances before finalization.
9.	South Africa		The Department of Science and Technology has signed an Agreement on Cooperation between India and South Africa in the field of Science and Technology. The Department of Agricultural Research and Education has proposed to sign a separate Work Plan in the field of Agricultural Research and Education with the Government of South Africa. The possible areas of cooperation include Soil Mapping, Efficient Fertilizer Use, Animal Disease Monitoring and Surveillance, Development of Vaccines, Diagnostics, Technology Inventory, Assessment, Exchange of Germplasm, etc.
10.	Thailand		A Memorandum of Understanding has been developed for cooperation with the Government of Kingdom of Thailand for cooperation in the field of Agricultural Science and Technology through Joint Activities and Exchanges. Such joint activities will be in areas of agricultural research, crop production, horticulture, livestock production and health etc.
11.	Uganda		An agreement is proposed to be signed between Indian Council of Agricultural Research and National Agricultural Research Organisation of Cooperation in the fields of Agricultural Research and Training and the Improvement of Production and Extension Techniques.
12.	Lao People's Democratic Republic		The Memorandum of Understanding proposed to be signed seeks to encourage cooperation in the field of agricultural science and technology with the objective of increasing agricultural production. In envisages joint activities in the areas of agricultural research, crop production, horticulture etc.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, India is an agricultural country but even today our agriculture production is very low as compared with the other developed countries. The hon. Agriculture Minister has told here in his reply that we has signed various agreements in agriculture sector and in future agreements with some countries are likely to be signed. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that various agreements have been signed but most of the old agreements are upto 1976. What benefits our country has derived as a result of those agreements? Whether the Agriculture Ministry has analysed them? If so, the advantage, our country is having due to these agreements?

MR. SPEAKER : It will be difficult to give the details of the entire country and country-wise it would be more difficult.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I give the country-wise details, it will consume the whole day today. First of all I would like to inform the hon. Member that the scientists of our country have a good reputation in foreign countries and our scientists are of world standard. Therefore, the developing countries have been asking for our scientists to educate their students to give them training and to set up research centres there. This way, much help is being extended. We should not think about the economic terms by having friendly agreements with them. When their students come here, we also earn foreign exchange dollars. The important aspect is that it leads to our good relations with those countries. In today's age economic base has been proving helpful in improving diplomatic relations. Therefore, we are using it and developing those countries. We have resources. We want that India should be a big centre of it so that India become a big centre of is not only in Asia but also in Africa and Arabian countries to help them. In agricultural sector, India is one of the biggest centre in the world and by doing so we are helping them.

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the World Bank has given suggestions to India to implement economic reforms in agriculture sector. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India has implemented those economic reforms and the number of projects being run with the World Bank assistance alongwith the details of the terms and conditions of implementing these projects?

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : It is another thing. There is nothing to involve the World Bank in it. I have a long list of that. You have asked whether India is helping it. We have been taking assistance from them and I can send a list of whatever you want for which we would have no objection. The details of the amount spent on these projects can also be sent.

SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reply furnished by the hon. Minister is not satisfactory but even then I would like to know the number of such projects running statewise for which foreign assistance is being received and what stage these projects have reached. Whether the Government have evaluated them and if so the details thereof? Part 'B' of my question is that six projects have been running with foreign assistance whcih is given in Agriculture's annual report. Give the names of those projects? Have those projects started and the assistance received under these projects in agriculture production. It should be made clear as to how much has been spent on these projects. There is a very short question linked with it, the details of the delegations which have been on bilateral visit to India during 1996, the points of bilateral discussion in agricultural sector and whether small and marginal farmers were included in it, if so, the details thereof.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : During 1996-97 the delegations of Oman, Senegal, Yaman, Australia, Trinidad & Tobago and U.S.A. have visited and there is a long list of the countries which are likely to be visited. If you want, I can give their names.

MR. SPEAKER : That is all in the reply and the entire list is enclosed.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : The entire list is given.

SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, please get the reply of the other remaining questions...*(Interruptions)* Mr. Speaker, Sir, whatever he has said has been accepted but the reply of other questions should be given.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : As far as the African countries are concerned 5 crore rupees have been allocated by the department through which we would help them. We have sent tractors to Barkina Faso. The work is going on there. The informations of the remaining countries will take time, but if the opposition is satisfied with the reply of the Government, it would come to this side. Do not do so, it is important for you to stay in the opposition.

SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister wants to take the opposition to his side while giving the reply regarding agriculture and wants to be 13 or 14 at the earliest but even then they are not united.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister through you that the desert of Isreal has been converted into green, we have diplomatic relations with that country and an agreement regarding agriculture has also been signed then what discussion was held to convert the Thar area of Rajasthan into green or has any plan been chalked out? I am asking so because I come from the Ganga area and due to erosion in that area the sand gathers there. We would like to know as to how farming can be done here. Has any programme been taken from Isreal through this agreement if it is so then give the details of that plan.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : The hon. Members have themselves talked about the agreement signed with Isreal. We are going to set up tissue culture centres at 24 places in this country. There would be one centre at Delhi and it would have a sattelite link. We would do so to develop tissue culture in 24 areas in the entire country.

As far as desert is concerned it would also be seen by our institute. But nothing has been talked about the Ganga and the sand with Isreal. That we would see ourselves.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the agreements were signed with Isreal during 1993-1996. The per hectare production there is much as compared with our country and the hon. Minister has said that the projects of tissue culture have been set up. In my district Wardha there is a worker named Daga ji. He has done a good job in this field but he does not get subsidy from the centre. In this case, one who does a tremendous job gets subsidy from the centre. He has written to the centre but till date he has not been getting subsidy. Whatever is done in Isreal to increase per hectare production, whether efforts would be made to bring that technique to our country and those who are to be given the subsidy is your responsibility and by when it would be given as per the agreement?

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : As far as the subsidy is concerned, we are not ready for that since it has not been mentioned about the subsidy in it. We would inform you separately about that.

We are goint to set up 24 centres with the assistance of Isreal and for the recovery of sugarcane we are going to set up these centres at three places with the assistance of a company of Isreal. One of the institutes would be set up at Coimbtore, one at Lucknow and another at some other place. An agreement would be signed for it with the company. That company has been claimed that it would produce such seeds whcih would lead to the recovery of sugarcane upto 17 per cent. At present we do not have the capacity beyond 11-12 per cent. We have been looking towards that aspect. If it is successful at three places we will take more steps in this regard.

[English]

Import of Edible Oils

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*223. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government's decision to import oil under the OGL and reduction of import duty has stabilised prices of the edible oils and oilseeds during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any concrete policy has been formulated for importing the edible oils during 1997; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The decision of the Government to import edible oils under OGL is guided by the present gap of 9 to 10 lakh tonnes between the demand and supply of edible oils, the annual rate of increase in the demand and the slow growth in the domestic oilseeds production in the country. The OGL imports have helped in stabilising the prices of edible oils and oilsseds in the country during the last 2 years as may be seen from the following :

Edible Oils	February 1996	February 1997 (15.2.97)
Edible Oils (Sub-group)	-1.3%	+2.2%
Vanaspati	-5.9%	-0.2%
Mustard Oil	+0.8%	-5.6%
Groundnut Oil	-0.2%	-1.2%
Cottonseed Oil	-11.4%	-3.1%
Ricebran Oil	-19.4%	-2.9%
EDIBLE OILSEEDS		
Edible Oilseeds (Sub-group)	-5.0%	+6.2%
Mustard Seed	-1.8%	-4.0%
Copra	+22.2%	+42.3%
Groundnut Seed	-6.0%	+15.7%
Cottonseed	-7.6%	-1.9%
Soyabean	+0.1%	+7.7%

(c) and (d) The existing import under OGL is taking place under the EXIM Policy of the Government. No decision has been taken yet for importing palmolein during 1997 under PDS.

[English]

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : In 1994-95, the import of edible oil was 8.32 lakh tonnes. Every year it is getting on increasing. In 1995, it was 12 lakh tonnes; in 1997, it is 15 lakh tonnes; and in 1998, it will be 17 lakh tonnes. Edible oil imports are going up like this. There will be a heavy drain in the foreign exchange